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MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D.
Regional Administrator

SUBJECT: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Coordinator Roles

The NOAA Fisheries Southeast Region (SER) NEPA coordinator is responsible for assisting me in promoting environmental policy coordination and ensuring SER actions comply with NEPA and related environmental legislation. The NEPA coordinator will review all SER categorical exclusions, environmental assessments, and environmental impact statements in coordination with the HQ National Environmental Policy Coordinator and General Counsel Southeast Region. The NEPA coordinator is also responsible for providing region-wide environmental policy coordination; technical oversight and quality assurance; NEPA contact/liaison; and the planning, programming, budgeting and execution of environmental compliance resources.

The SER NEPA coordinator will serve as the key environmental policy contact to all SER offices, the three Fishery Management Councils (FMCs), Federal, state, and local agencies and the public. The NEPA coordinator will also provide support for implementing the Regulatory Streamlining Project by: (1) front loading the NEPA process to provide a "no surprises" approach, (2) ensuring that appropriate SER staff is properly trained in the NEPA process and offering such training to FMC staff as we have in the past, and (3) providing advice on integrating environmental requirements and policy issues. All three SER FMCs and all SER NOAA Fisheries staff offices should involve the NEPA coordinator early and often in their NEPA activities in order to enhance the process and make it more useful to decision makers and the public. The NEPA coordinator function is critical to the success of the SER. If you are uncertain whether or not to include the NEPA coordinator in your projects/actions, then I urge you to err on the side of including the NEPA coordinator. This memorandum will be posted on the NEPA portion of the SER Web page at the above address.

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